# Christian Community

**A Program Service of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio**

Volume 3. No. 7 December, 1951

# TO SAFEGUARD OUR LIBERTIES

**By Patrick Murphy Malin**

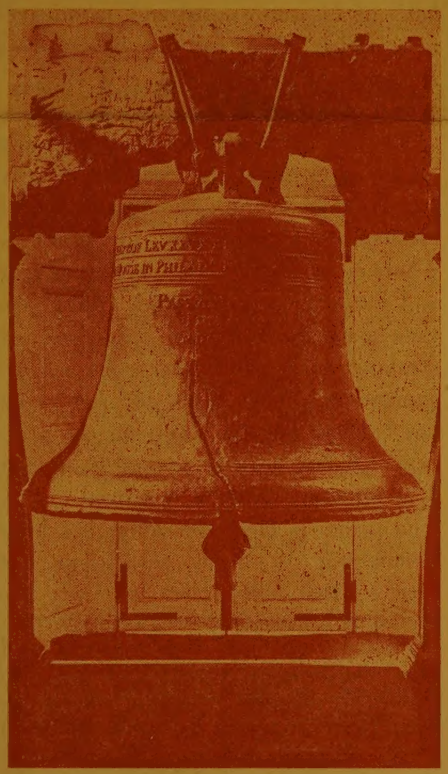
When our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, they brought forth a specific kind of new nation — "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

That concept is our nation's glory and at the same time our perplexity. For in these times, when totalitarian aggression threatens freedom everywhere, we are faced with the monumental task of retaining our national security without jeopardizing any of our priceless individual liberties.

Resolving this problem is not easy. The American Civil Liberties Union, which has made this question one of its chief concerns in recent years, has seen the magnitude and complexity of the problem in our daily work.

We have observed how government, in its legitimate pursuit of means for the prevention and punishment of treasonable and revolutionary acts, has unfortunately stepped over, in many instances, its proper boundaries into an invasion of civil liberties. We have seen, too, how on a non-governmental level, anxiety and fear have swept over much of the nation, with the result that hysteria and panic have, in the name of patriotism, too often replaced the quiet and rational defense of the cornerstones of our liberty — free expression, due process, and equality before the law.

**We have come to realize, therefore, that the challenge of security and freedom is a two-fold one. It involves, first, a re-evaluation of government's role and steps in the maintenance of national safety so that the democratic liberties we seek to defend against aggression are not whittled away in the acts of preparedness and defense. Secondly, it means that citizens individually must develop a keener understanding of the dangers to their own liberties, not only from Communism and other totalitarianism but also from an emotionally unbalanced concept of patriotism and "loyalty."**



**Threatened by aggressive totalitarianism from without and by dangerous reactions to our insecurity within, Americans do well to think seriously about their historic liberties.**

Individual citizens and groups of citizens are needed to help resolve, not only the first, but the second problem as well. It is apparent that interest and action by an enlightened, participating citizenry are the best guarantee that government will move decisively to eliminate the contradictions present in too many of our national efforts to preserve both security and freedom.

## Current Trends

Let us, therefore, examine some of the chief efforts to resolve the problems of security and freedom, noting wherein they are inadequate and suggesting what church members and other citizens may do to improve the situation:

**1. Legislative Efforts—**

The Internal Security (McCarran) Act of 1950 is perhaps the most outstanding example of recent legislation designed to bolster national security. However, it is a dangerous law. It is the worst departure since the infamous Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 from the key principle of American law that a man is accountable only for his *own* illegal *acts*, not for mere *association* with persons who hold obnoxious *opinions*. It establishes a frightening precedent for the discriminatory penalization of any group that may someday be unpopular for reasons less dangerous than those represented today by Communist and Communist-front organizations.

The Smith Act of 1940, most recently applied to Communist leaders but also used against other political minorities, is another threatening law. Under its provisions, we have seen men convicted and sentenced to jail, not for revolutionary *acts*, but for speaking, teaching and advocating revolutionary *ideas*—a shocking departure from the fundamental American principles of law and justice, which have always held that freedom for the expression of ideas, however abhorrent, was sacred, because (among other reasons) invading it establishes a precedent for the suppression of ideas generally.

**2. Legislative Investigating Committees—**

The House Committee on Un-American Activities — despite marked improvement in its methods—and the

Senate Committee on Internal Security continue to exact a higher toll in reduced free speech and due process of law than is to be gained by the exposure of the activities of alleged subversive groups and individuals and in contrast to the more precise, fairer investigations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Without adequate safeguards for the accused to confront and cross-examine his accusers, fair and equal reply by those under investigation is impossible. And because of unscrupulous methods of publicity, these committees have helped to promote unreasoning hysteria, suspicion of government officials, a frightful defamation of the reputations and motives of loyal citizens and the creation of private censors and judges of the loyalty and sincerity of some of the nation's leading thinkers and creative artists.

**3. Federal Loyalty Programs—**

Although the all-embracing federal employment loyalty program has been efficiently and, on the whole, justly administered it has operated under severely-limited conditions of fairness. Suspected persons have received inadequate specifications of charges, inadequate acquaintance wtih the evidence against them or its sources, and inadequate opportunity to confront unfavorable witnesses. In addition the vast amounts of money, energy and time spent on it might have been better employed, or even reduced, by concentrating on those federal positions directly involved in "security" areas actually affecting the conduct of military affairs and international relations. Proof that the loyalty program was ill-conveived may be seen in the fact that, of the millions of federal employees scrutinized, less than one-twentieth of one per cent have been found to be in any way of doubtful loyalty—and of these only a small number were actually engaged in work affecting national security.

**4. State and Local Loyalty Probes and Oaths—**

State and local loyalty oaths, applicable principally to teachers and other public employees, have notoriously failed to unearth persons intent on subversive acts, for the simple reason that such persons have no hesitation in signing oaths of loyalty. In any event, the possibility of a charge of perjury against someone actually caught in a subversive act would be the least of the evidence against him, and hardly likely to deter him from taking illegal steps. Loyalty oaths *do* deprive society of the services of conscientious civil servants who are morally opposed to signing a statement whose meaning some administrator must interpret and whose implication is that a man's work is to be judged on the basis of his conformity and submissiveness rather than by the honest performance of his duties.

**5. Private Efforts to Determine Loyalty—**

Possibly more open to abuse than any of the other efforts to reconcile security and freedom is the growing practice of ideological vigilante-ism in America. There is an unmistakable feeling of fear and intolerance in the land, stifling the time-honored American traditions of speaking one's mind freely, joining organizations which work for something one believes in, and observing the principles of fair hearing and of holding a man innocent until he is proved guilty. Too often of late, accusation has been tantamount to guilt, association has been equated with action, publicity has been as effective as conviction in wreaking punishment and real economic and social hardship on a person attacked on frequently baseless grounds, whose disproof never receives as much attention as the original charges. If unchecked, these practices can lead only to the gradual withdrawal, if not suppression, of all critical expression, without which no democracy can be vigorous and meaningful.

## What Can We Do?

What, then, can we do—as individuals, as members of our church groups, as voters and constituents of legislators—to remedy the existing injustices, to prevent precedents from having their potentially evil effects, and to work, above all, for a rational, effective, thoughtfully-planned response to the challenge of security and freedom?

There are many things we can do.

1. **Maintain active and enlightened contact with our legislators and our other government officials on all levels to let them know we oppose legislation such as the McCarran and Smith Acts. We must demand their repeal or drastic revision on the grounds that previously-existing laws and the FBI are a means of checking real subversive acts, and any new legislation necessary must not invade the realm of free speech and assembly.**
2. **Insist that congressional investigating committees confine themselves to their proper sphere of pure investigation and legislative recommendations, leaving aside the present function of acting as judges, prosecutors and juries in unofficial courts which lack any of the safeguards of true courts. We must also urge that all investigations be carried out with due regard for American concepts of justice and fair play and that committee procedures be reformed toward that end.**
3. **Register our protest, through the use of our voting franchise and constant expression of opinion, against the spread of state and local loyalty oaths and their naive reliance on inquisitorial methods that accomplish no purpose other than the intimidation and inhibition of truly open-minded education, creative thinking and conscientious public service.**
4. **Most personally—and most important—we must all exercise our own precious rights of free speech and free assembly, and support the right of others to present their views, even those whose opinions we detest. We must by our vigorous and unending speech and organized activity, oppose the practices of guilt by innuendo and conviction by accusation. We should not yield to hysterical thinking, but should always examine every issue in a rational manner.**

Only by these methods can we insure that democracy and freedom will not be lost in this period of tension. For just as there can be no harmless, small cancer in a human body there is no such things as a harmless, small violation of civil liberties. Both spread if adequate steps are not taken at once to cut them out. And the most powerful of defenses against outside dangers are useless if the inner structure is left exposed to infection. Let us, therefore, make certain that our defenses against outside aggressions are secure. But let us keep fixed in our minds that our inner defense of freedom and civil liberties should remain equally impregnable.

**CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

Additional copies may be obtained for 2 cents each. Requests from Congregational Christians should be addressed to Ray Gibbons, Director, Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. Requests by Evangelical and Reformed, and others, as well as news items and communications, should be addressed to the Editor, Huber F. Klemme, Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio

*Following a distinguished career as a college professor, Patrick Murphy Malin recently succeeded Roger Baldwin as Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, with offices at 170 Fifth Ave., New York City.*

# International Relations Letter

November 1, 1951

The treaty with Japan will be up for consideration when Congress reconvenes in January. The National Council of Churches has an excellent statement on the treaty and we suggest you write to Dr. Walter Van Kirk, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, for a copy of it. There isn't space here for extended comment but I would like to say something about the two most talked of provisions in the treaty. The first is the business of

### Japanese Rearmament

The Japanese constitution, adopted under our supervision, says that Japan will never again resort to arms for the settlement of international disputes. The treaty, however, gives Japan the right to rearm. Some people are saying that, having required Japan to renounce war, we are now giving her permission, or even urging her, to get ready for war, and they think this is inconsistent—and worse. Let's admit that this provision of the treaty is both inconsistent and unfortunate. Supporters of the treaty have three answers. First, you can't actually deny to any nation the right of self-defense. If Japan should decide she is in danger (and she is!) nothing in the world could prevent her from arming to meet the danger. Second, all of us ought to reduce our armaments but, instead, all of us are feverishly rearming. In such a situation, you cannot—you literally cannot—compel one nation to remain unarmed. Third, as John Foster Dulles put it the other day, to deny a defeated nation the right to arms is an incitement to that nation to demonstrate her sovereignty by rearming. This aspect of the treaty is a part of the whole tragic international situation and is not something that could be changed by treaty.

### A Treaty of Reconciliation

It cannot be denied that seldom, if ever, has a defeated nation been offered a treaty so free of harsh and vengeful terms. It *is* a treaty of reconciliation. For this the victorious nations and, particularly, the architect of the treaty, John Foster Dulles, deserves our thanks. But a word of caution is in order. Lest we begin to point to our treatment of Japan with too much self-satisfaction, we might remember that we are being generous with Japan *partly* because we have another enemy now and we need a friendly and strong Japan to help us meet the new threat. The motives of nations, as of individuals, are always mixed. No doubt God can sometimes make good use of our actions even when our motives are not altogether noble but a relatively "good" nation that thinks it is much better than it actually is can be almost as dangerous as a nation in the hands of an evil government.

### Ambassador to the Vatican?

Protestants can hardly be blamed for jumping with both feet on the President's proposal to send an ambassador to the Vatican. The plan ought to be defeated. But there is an aspect of our opposition that the ungodly will certainly notice and that ought to put Protestants in a mood for sackcloth and ashes. Almost never are Protestants able to unite behind a positive and creative idea. Even when, as in the case, let us say, of the Point IV program, we are pretty generally agreed, we don't seem to be able to get up much steam. But look at us now! We're moving "like a mighty army"—*against* something! And, what makes for even more wry thoughts, a lot of our fervor stems from plain old-fashioned "anti-Catholicism." While we are lifting up our voices against sending an ambassador to the Vatican we would better also lift them loud and long against our own relegious complacency, our shameful disunity, against the kind of ignorant, self-righteous anti-Catholicism that hasn't a thing in its favor, and against the danger of forgetting that there are other battles going on in our world at least as important as limiting Catholic Power.

### Why Not Next Summer?

Most of the people who want very much to visit Europe manage somehow to get there. If you have been dreaming about it, why not make a serious effort to arrange your affairs so that you can go next summer? The folder sent to Congregationalists with the November issue of Christian Community and enclosed for E&R's this month tells you all about the C.S.A.'s 1952 Seminar. If the trip is quite out of the question for you, why not think of someone in your church who would be a good member of the Seminar?

### If You Don't Mind Thinking

One thing I'd like to do just now: Get a half dozen friends to read George F. Kennan's book, "American Diplomacy, 1900-1950" and then spend an evening discussing it. (University of Chicago Press. $2.75. 154 pages.) Take the chapters on World War I and World War II. Kennan is no pacifist but what he says about those wars is enough to shake us out of any remaining confidence in what war can accomplish. And when you get into the chapter on "Diplomacy in the Modern World" I'll wager you will leave the pages messy with underlinings and question marks and exclamation points.

### More on Point IV

Here are some facts compiled by Tom Keehn. Of the $7.5 billion for foreign aid provided by the Mutual Security Act of 1951, nearly $6 billion is for military end items. Over $1 billion is for economic aid to strengthen the defense program in Europe. The balance, about $400 million, is for economic aid, relief programs, and technical assistance to the Near East, Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and American Republics. The Point IV program is a part of the $400 million. Just how much will be used for Point IV work cannot be determined but it will probably be in the neighborhood of $100 million—or about 1.3% of the total foreign aid program. Tom's question (and mine): "Is this enough for this program dedicated to peace and justice in our troubled world?"

If you want a more detailed analysis of the bill, including the administrative set-up, write to Rev. Thomas B. Keehn, 1751 N Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

*Herman F. Reissig*

## Urge Every Church Study Point Four

The Commission on Christian Social Action at its September meeting devoted major attention to questions of international policy. It took action urging every congregation in the Evangelical and Reformed Church to study and support the "Point Four" program of technical and economic assistance to underdeveloped areas. Suggested materials have been indicated in *Christian Community,* and inquiries are always welcome at the Commission office.

The Commission also adopted a resolution calling for a sustained program of relief and rehabilitation for the refugees made homeless by war in Palestine, and a resolution opposing the enactment of universal military training and service as a permanent national policy. Copies of these statements may be secured on request.

## Organize Unofficial Social Action Group

A new unofficial Protestant movement for social action was organized at a national conference held at Howard University, Washington, D. C., September 14-15. Taking the name Christian Action, it adopted a statement affirming that "the Gospel impels us to work together for a responsible society—local, national, and world-wide—which will give each person or group a fair and equal opportunity to develop his full potentialities." Rejecting all forms of totalitarianism, Christian Action calls attention to economic inequalities, racialism, insecurity and fear as among the evils which have brought millions under the jeopardy of totalitarian enslavement.

Among those elected to the executive council are John C. Bennett, David Burgess, Ray Gibbons, Reinhold Niebuhr, Liston Pope, and E. E. Schattschneider. Information can be secured from Christian Action, 100 East Pearl St., New Haven, Connecticut.

### Vocational Conference

The first North American lay conference on "The Christian and His Daily Work" will be held at Buffalo, New York, February 21-24, 1952. "Christian vocation requires responsibility to God in the decisions and relationships of daily work," is the theme of the study conference. Delegations are being chosen to represent denominations and councils of churches of the United States and Canada.

## Synod Looks at Technical Aid

South Indiana Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church at its three sectional conferences in Mulberry, Indiana, Louisville, Kentucky, and Evansville, Indiana, included on its program a special feature prepared by Dr. Ralph Holland, executive secretary of the Indiana Council of Churches and chairman of the synod committee on Christian social action. A visual presentation on "point four" was arranged, using an opaque projector to show pictures and charts from government publications. Huber Klemme, who also appeared on the synod program, assisted Dr. Holland in interpreting and answering questions.

## Pilot Projects

Five centers in the Chicago area are holding five sessions on social action this fall and winter. Each center's monthly meeting began the week of October 10th with Francis McPeek as leader. The November 14th projects were led by Ray Gibbons and the sessions in December, January and February will be led by Herman Reissig, Galen Weaver and Thomas Keehn.

New York Conference social action committee is setting up its third year of Pilot Projects in six new centers beginning January 6 and continuing at three weeks intervals for five sessions. Over 25 churches participated in the institutes last year. Similar series of two hour monthly conferences have been conducted by Michigan and New Jersey.

### Institutes

A two day institute on social action was held for the Congregational Christian churches in Colorado, December 1 and 2. Meetings were held at the Ohio Congregational Church beginning at 2:30 on Saturday and continuing through Sunday evening. Francis W. McPeek, Galen R. Weaver and Ray Gibbons were staff members participating. The program was arranged and led by the Rev. Jeffrey Hoy, chairman of the state social action committee.

Similar institutes were held in Seattle, Washington, September 29 and 30 under the chairmanship of the Rev. William McDowell, chairman of state social action, and the Rev. Ray Gibbons. Another such institute was held in the First Church, Portland, Oregon on October 13-14 under the direction of the state social action chairman, the Rev. Thomas McCamant.

## Lively Discussion of "Christian Action" Statement

Over one hundred and sixty Congregational Christian Churches ordered copies of the Group Leaders Manual on "Christian Action for a World in Crisis" within three weeks after receiving the announcement. This initial response shows that the draft statement of the Commission on the Christian Basis for Social Action has struck a vital need in the church program. Pastors and social action leaders recognize that the great need today is "to build bridges between the Christian faith and the specific problems men face today."

"If you haven't heard about it yet," writes the pastor of one church, "here's telling you we have a fine study and action group in our Linden Hills Church. We meet twice each month, the second and fourth Thursdays. Our attendance runs from 14 to 23." The pastor of another church in the same city ordered enough copies of the draft statement for discussion in a series of meetings of "colony" groups in the whole parish. Many churches expect to have four or five groups with a leader for each and make reports to the Commission after each of their four sessions. The goal is to have 1,000 such groups discussing the Commission's draft statement before March 1, 1952.

The topics discussed are practical and important. "What is the public interest? Are times as bad as they say? Who influences our minds? Who runs the community? What is the *real* business of the Church? With what groups can the churches cooperate for social goals? Should the churches stay out of politics? What is the Church and her witness?" Each question has reference to portions of the draft statement. Adequate materials for study and forms for reporting to the Commission are included in the eighty-page mimeographed manual which is sent without charge to the group leader. Copies of the draft statement are provided for each member of the group.

After the period of study and reporting, the Commission will revise its draft and submit it to the General Council in June, 1952. Dean Liston Pope of Yale Divinity School is chairman of the Commission.